

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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Contact: Cooper Bratton
Phone: 919/733-5612

GOV. EASLEY ANNOUNCES HEALTH INITIATIVE FOCUSING ON DISEASE PREVENTION
Urging citizens to lead healthier lifestyles

Raleigh— Today, Governor Mike Easley declared September 2004, “Healthy North Carolina Month.” In a proclamation issued at the State Employee’s Wellness Fair, he encouraged all 100 counties to participate by sponsoring prevention, wellness or fitness activities during September.

“Health care costs across the country are skyrocketing,” said Easley. “For every one dollar spent on prevention, some companies have seen savings of three dollars on health care costs. An ounce of prevention is truly worth a pound of cure.”

Chronic disease accounts for 75 percent of health care expenditures nationally. Preventable and controllable diseases including asthma, diabetes, cancer and heart disease cost the government and private employers billions of dollars every year. From 1995 to 2002, diabetes increased in North Carolina by 75 percent. In 2002, diabetes-related hospitalization costs in the state totaled \$2.4 billion.

The Governor challenged every North Carolinian to get involved in Healthy North Carolina month by participating in wellness activities, using workplace wellness programs and benefits available through their health insurance programs and participating in disease screening and detection events.

“When you make healthy lifestyle choices, your body and your wallet will benefit,” said Easley. “Whether it is a 5K run, a blood screening at a local church or nutritional education in our schools, I encourage every North Carolinian to use September to identify ways that will lead to a healthier life.”

The Division of Public Health, in the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, will coordinate this effort by working with community leaders in each county to help organize wellness activities during the month of September.

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